

2023 City of Ottawa Film Guidelines

The City of Ottawa's Event Central unit is responsible for coordinating municipal services and issuing Film Permits under the [Ottawa Film by-law](#) filming on City of Ottawa property should only need to engage with Event Central. However, with more complex production requests, Event Central may service areas and representatives from production.

1. Application process

As outlined in the Ottawa Film By-law, applicants are required to apply to Event Central for a Film Permit a minimum of five (5) business days in advance of the filming event for standard filming events. Filming events that require more complex approvals may have extended application timelines ([Schedule A of the Ottawa Film By-law](#)).

Your filming event will need a Film Permit if the activities:

- require the use of any property that is owned or managed by the City of Ottawa (including the right-of-way);
- occur on public or private property and includes the presence of replica weapons and/or replica emergency vehicles or uniforms visible to the public; and/or
- require the coordination of any City of Ottawa resources* or the Ottawa Police Service.

“City resources” means personnel and/or any required equipment from the City including Fire Services, the Paramedic Service, By-law and Regulatory Services, the Ottawa Police Service, or other municipal services.

In addition to submitting a completed Film Permit Application, applicants are required to provide the following documents:

- [Bilingual notice to residents and businesses](#); and
- Certificate of Insurance (see Section 3 for requirements).

Event Central will review your application and advise you of any conflicts or concerns no later than three (3) business days after receipt of the application.

Filming events requiring City of Ottawa highway closures, transit detours, Paid Duty Officers etc., may require additional time for approvals as well as documentation such as traffic plans, security plans and emergency plans. Please see the sections below for

additional information.

Please note, incomplete applications cannot be processed and will delay the approval process.

2. Fees

There is no application fee to obtain a Film Permit; however, depending on your request, there may be costs incurred such as parking fees, signage installation fees, City of Ottawa park and facility use fees, Paid Duty Officers, Ottawa Fire Services personnel and equipment, Ottawa Paramedic Service personnel and equipment. Additionally, when applications do not comply with our minimum application timeline of five (5) business days, a rush fee between \$200 and \$400 will apply.

3. Insurance

At least five (5) business days prior to the event, the applicant must provide proof that that the production has obtained a General Liability Insurance Policy in relation to the filming event with limits of not less than Two Million Dollars (\$2,000,000.00) inclusive per occurrence for bodily injury, death, and damage to property, including loss of use thereof.

Please ensure the City of Ottawa's general mailing address is included on the certificate in the “certificate holder” as well as “additionally insured” category:

City of Ottawa
110 Laurier Avenue, West
Ottawa, ON K1P 1J1

4. Notification of filming to residents and businesses

Applicants are required to notify residents and businesses impacted by a film event at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance of filming. Applicants may use the [“Notice to residents and businesses template”](#) or they may develop their own. Notifications must be distributed in both French and English and include the following information:

- Location of the filming event;
- Date and time of the filming event;
- A description of what will take place during filming and potential impacts, such as, but not limited to, street closures, detours, and alternate access routes;

- The telephone number of the production company and a direct contact that will respond to resident inquiries; and
- The name and number of the Film By-law (No. 2020-164).

Event Central may require that additional information be included. The applicant must provide a copy of the notification to Event Central before distribution and must notify Event Central of any concerns identified by the noticed parties. Event Central will consult with the applicable municipal departments as well as notify the Ward Councillor and local Business Improvement Area of any proposed filming activities.

5. Restrictions on filming days/hours

The days/hours for filming and setup (dates ahead of filming for set decorating and set up activities, etc.) must be clearly stated on the Film Permit Application. If necessary, the City of Ottawa may limit the hours for filming and setup. These restrictions are based on a number of factors including but not limited to conflict with planned special events or City work, availability of space, availability of staff, etc.

6. Parking

Event Central can help locate suitable parking for production vehicles within Ottawa. Applicants requiring reserved parking spaces must complete the parking section of the Film Permit Application and submit it to Event Central at least five (5) business days in advance of filming. Applicants are expected to limit impacts to business and residents as much as possible while considering parking options for filming. In cases where the City is asked to provide parking options, impacts to residents and businesses as well as frequency of use will be considered before approval.

Production vehicles parking on municipal streets must display a copy of the parking permit in their windshield. Applicants requesting the use of paid parking areas will be required to reimburse the City of Ottawa for lost revenue at a rate determined through the budget process for each term of Council. For more information regarding the reimbursing for lost revenue, visit the [Budget, finance, and corporate planning](#) page.

Production vehicles must adhere to all applicable by-laws and not block accessible parking spaces, fire hydrants, driveways, or other access/egress ramps. Vehicles must be parked a minimum of nine (9) metres from an intersection.

Bus stop zones are considered no parking areas. Requests for relocation of bus stops must be submitted to Event Central at least ten (10) business days in advance of filming

and will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by OC Transpo. Bus stop zones are thirty-four (34) metres on approach and eighteen (18) metres on egress.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to make alternate arrangements for residents in possession of a valid street parking permit whose vehicles are displaced by filming activity. Relocating vehicles by towing to accommodate filming or parking is not permitted.

7. Traffic

Filming on a City of Ottawa street or sidewalk requires approval and, in most cases, an associated permit, particularly if there is a need for street closures or intermittent traffic stoppages. Applicants proposing to close roadway lanes or effect a complete closure of a roadway are required to complete the Road closure section of the Film Permit Application and submit it to Event Central at least ten (10) business days in advance of filming. Event Central will direct these requests to Traffic Management for approval and determine if there are additional requirements. The use of barricades, traffic control plans, (based on Book 7 of the Highway Traffic Manual), or Ottawa Police Service Paid Duty Officers may be necessary.

Please note the following restrictions for traffic requests:

- Lane closures are not normally permitted on major collector and arterial roads during the peak periods of 6 am – 9:00 am and 3:00 pm – 6:00 pm, Monday to Friday.
- Complete closures are not normally permitted on arterial roads from 7:00 am – 6:00 pm, Monday to Friday.

Lane and road closures on non-arterial roadways are assessed on a case-by-case basis. Traffic Management, in conjunction with the Ottawa Police Service, will review all requests.

User fees are applicable for costs related to transit detours as well as covering, altering, removing and/or reinstalling traffic and/or street signs.

Where a moving vehicle is involved, the applicant shall adhere to posted speed limits and to the Ontario Highway Traffic Act, unless a road is closed for filming.

Please note, filming on 400 hundred series highways, the Transitway, light rail, arterial roadways, and major collector streets requires special consideration. The Transitway and O-Train are private roadway/property and require approval by the General Manager

or designated authority of Transportation Services; as such, these approvals may require additional time to process.

8. Municipal parks

The City of Ottawa has a wide range of parks and outdoor green spaces available for filming. Applicants are required to complete a Film Permit Application at least five (5) business days in advance of filming to confirm availability and confirm the rental agreement. User fees apply based on the space(s) being considered.

9. Municipal owned/operated buildings

The City of Ottawa has many unique indoor facilities, ranging from City Hall to libraries and recreation centres available for filming. User fees may apply depending on time of entry and security requirements. Event Central can provide a full list of municipal sites available for filming.

10. Firearms, weapons, and gunfire

Any filming events involving firearms, weapons, gunfire, or any depiction of violence visible or audible to the public at any point (while filming or not) are required to submit a Film Permit Application and may be required to have an Ottawa Police Paid Duty Officer onsite. The City of Ottawa requires a minimum of ten (10) business days for these requests to be reviewed. The use of replica firearms should be indicated on the Film Permit Application. The applicant shall observe and comply with all applicable Federal, Provincial, and local laws pertaining in any way to the use of firearms and is responsible for obtaining all required approvals and permits related to the use of firearms.

11. Replica emergency personnel and vehicles

In instances where the applicant plans to make use of replica emergency personnel and/or vehicles, the applicant may be required to have Ottawa Police Paid Duty Officer onsite. Applicants should indicate the planned use of replica emergency personnel in the Film Permit Application. The City requires a minimum of ten (10) business days for these requests to be reviewed.

12. Stunts, special effects, and pyrotechnics

All staged violent scenes, stunts and special effects, including large crowd scenes which could result in injuries requires the approval of the relevant emergency services to ensure that public safety issues are addressed, and adequate resources are secured.

This includes the use of large stunts (requiring pyrotechnics), physical and performing stunts that require the presence of emergency personnel, or picture vehicles for chase and/or crash scenes. When deemed necessary, Paid Duty Officers and/or Paramedics may also be required.

Applicants proposing the use of pyrotechnics and/or discharged fireworks are required to indicate the use of pyrotechnics on the Film Permit Application and submit it to Event Central at least twenty-two (22) business days in advance of filming. The applicant shall observe and comply with all applicable Federal, Provincial, and local laws pertaining in any way to the use of pyrotechnics and/or discharged fireworks and is responsible for obtaining all required approvals and permits related to the use of pyrotechnics and/or discharged fireworks.

In some instances, applicants may be asked to submit a copy of their emergency and site plan(s) that include items such as, but not restricted to; temporary structures, fencing, incendiary devices, their strategy for responding to injuries and medical emergencies and the identification of any first aid or medical response provider(s) contracted to support the production. The need for additional documentation will be determined by Event Central on a case-by-case basis.

13. Use of police, fire and paramedic equipment, vehicles, and personnel

Event Central will assist production companies in verifying paid duty requirements with the applicable services. Event Central will also assist in obtaining approvals for permit applicants wishing to film emergency service equipment, vehicles and/or personnel, permitted resources are available.

Requests for such approvals must be made to Event Central at least ten (10) business days before the filming event.

14. Use and filming of OC Transpo equipment, vehicles personnel or property

Approval is required prior to filming and/or using any OC Transpo logos, equipment, vehicles, personnel and/or property as filming is prohibited under the Transit By-law. Event Central is available to assist applicants in obtaining approvals from the required departments if filming on transit property is required for the filming event. Applicants can make use of the filming summary to detail the proposed use of OC Transpo equipment, vehicles, personnel, or property.

15. Disruption to residents and businesses

Applicants must ensure there is minimum disruption to residents and businesses. The safe movement of traffic must be ensured. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Minimizing negative effects from lighting, noise, pollution, etc.
- Ensuring residents, business owners, customers, and visitors have access to premises; and
- Ensuring that cast and crew conduct themselves in a safe, professional, and respectful manner.

In an effort to ensure that these requirements are adhered to, applicants are required to circulate Notices to Residents and Businesses impacted by the filming event no later than 48 hours in advance of the filming event.

16. Clean-up

Applicants must clean the location at the end of each filming day and ensure that the area is returned to its original condition.

Approval from Event Central is required for any exceptions and applicable fees will apply.

Materials and debris are not to be washed into catch basins. Grey water must be collected and disposed of in a sanitary sewer. Grey water must not be disposed of in a storm sewer.

The applicant is responsible for any damage to City of Ottawa property or infrastructure that is beyond normal wear and tear.

17. Unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) or drones

The operation of an unmanned aerial vehicle or drone is regulated by Transport Canada.

In cases where a drone is identified as a component of a filming event, Event Central will request confirmation of compliance with all applicable airspace regulations.

Once the applicant informs Event Central that a UAV will be used in a film event, it will be determined if a road closure is required. Site meetings with the appropriate internal and external stakeholders may be necessary.

Due to the complexities of approving a drone operation, we require that applications are submitted ten (10) business days in advance of the filming event. Additionally, it may be determined that Paid Duty Officers and/or a road closure are required to support the proposed filming activity.

Please provide the follow information along with a completed Film Permit Application:

- Proof of air space clearance from NAV Canada
- Flight Plan clearly indicating take off location, route while in the air and landing location
- Pilot Certificate
- Basic Operations/Advanced Operations
- Proof of registration
- Model and Serial Number
- Insurance
 - Certificate of drone insurance with the following elements:
 - Add the City of Ottawa as an Additional Insured
 - Include a Waiver of Subrogation in favour of the City of Ottawa
 - Provide the City of Ottawa with 30 days' written notice of cancellation

For more information on drone usage, visit [Transport Canada's permission for special drone operations](#).

The applicant must notify area residents and businesses in its notification letter that filming will involve the use of a UAV.

City of Ottawa By-laws, policies, and procedures

The following list provides a summary of the most referenced By-laws with respect to filming activities. This list is not intended to be a complete listing of all by-laws that may apply to a filming event. Applicants are responsible for ensuring that they are aware of and comply with all relevant By-laws and all applicable provincial and/or federal legislation.

A full list of [City of Ottawa by-laws](#) is available on Ottawa.ca.

Animal Care and Control (By-law No. 2003-77)

Discharge of Firearms (By-law No. 2002-344)

Encroachments on City Highways (By-law No. 2003-446)

Fireworks (By-law No. 2003-237)

Idling Control (By-law No. 2007-266)

Noise (By-law No.2017-255)

Over-dimensional Vehicles on City Highways (By-law No. 2003-497)

Parking (By-law No. 2003-530)

Property Standards (By-law No. 2013 - 416)

Road Activity (By-law No. 2003-445)

Smoke-free – Public Places (By-law No. 2001-148)

Special Events on City Streets (By-law No. 2001-260)

Special Events on Public and Private Property (By-law No. 2013-232)

Temporary All-Terrain Vehicles & Other Vehicles (By-law No. 2013-199)

Temporary Signs on Private Property (By-law No. 2004-239)

Transit (By-law No. 2007-268)

Use and Care of Roads (By-law No. 2003-498)

Zoning (By-law No. 2008-250)

2023 code of conduct for cast and crew

To the public: If you find a production company is not adhering to this Code of Conduct, please call the Ottawa Film Office at 613-695-1955, Monday-Friday between the hours of 8:30 am and 4:30 pm or e-mail info@ottawa.film.

- A notice to residents and businesses is to be distributed 48 hours in advance of the filming event, with addresses directly impacted or adjacent to the filming event and other locations deemed necessary by the Manager, and said notice to residences and businesses shall be in both official languages and include:
 - The location of the filming event;
 - Date and time of the filming event;
 - A description of what will take place during filming and potential impacts such as, but not limited to, street closures, detours and the addresses alternate access route;
 - The name and number of this By-law;
 - The telephone number of the production company and a direct contact that will respond to resident inquiries; and
 - Other information as determined by the Manager.
- Production vehicles arriving on location in or near a residential neighbourhood shall not enter the area before the time stipulated on the permit. Production vehicles shall park one by one, turning off engines as soon as possible. Cast and crew vehicles are not covered by the location filming permit and shall observe designated parking areas noted by location managers. This shall appear on the call sheet map.
- Moving or towing of any third-party vehicle by the production company is prohibited.
- Production vehicles shall not block, or park in, driveways without the express permission of the driveway owner.
- Pedestrian traffic shall not be obstructed at any time without prior approval. All cables and similar items must be channeled.
- Cast and crew shall not trespass on residents' or merchants' property. They must remain within the boundaries of the property that has been permitted for filming.
- No alcoholic beverages are permitted at any time on any set or location.

- All trash must be disposed of properly. All napkins, plates, and coffee cups used in the course of the workday shall be disposed of in the proper receptacles. All catering, crafts service, construction, strike, and personal trash must be removed from the location, ensuring that all locations are returned to their original condition.
- Cast and crew shall observe designated smoking areas and always extinguish cigarettes in appropriate containers. The City of Ottawa does not permit smoking or vaping of any substance in any public place or workplace.
- Removing, trimming and/or cutting of vegetation or trees are prohibited unless approved by the relevant municipal authority (existing City by-laws) or property owner.
- Cast and crew shall not remove City Street signs. This must be coordinated through the City's Event Central unit who will make a request to Traffic Services.
- Every member of the cast and crew shall always keep noise levels as low as possible. Cast and crew will refrain from the use of lewd or improper language.
- Every member of the cast and crew shall not display signs, posters, or pictures on vehicles that members of the public may find offensive or objectionable (i.e., material containing vulgar language or sexual content).
- Every member of the crew shall wear a production pass (badge) when required by the location.
- The cast and crew shall not bring guests or pets to the location, unless expressly authorized in advance by the production company.
- It is up to the production company to make alternate off-street parking arrangements for residents in possession of a valid street parking permit for that area whose vehicles are displaced by the filming activity. Relocating vehicles by towing to accommodate filming or parking is not permitted.
- The production company will comply at all times with the City of Ottawa Film By-law as well as all other applicable By-laws and guidelines for filming in the City of Ottawa, including the Ontario Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, c.H.19. A copy of the production's Film Permit shall be on location at all times with the site representative.
- The production company commits to providing a safe and respectful workplace, free of harassment including sexual harassment, discrimination, bullying and

violence for all those involved in the filming event including but not limited to cast, crew, and City staff.

- The production company appreciates your cooperation and assistance in upholding the Code of Conduct. Failure to comply with this Code of Conduct can result in disciplinary action by the production company or your Union, Guild or Association.